

May 23 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1994

The three export control regulations issued under the Enhanced Proliferation Control Initiative are fully in force and continue to be used to control the export of items with potential use in chemical or biological weapons (CBW) or unmanned delivery systems for weapons of mass destruction.

During the last 6 months, the United States has continued to address actively in its international diplomatic efforts the problem of the proliferation and use of CBW.

More than 150 nations have signed the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and a number have already ratified it. On November 23, 1993, I submitted the CWC to the Senate for its advice and consent to ratification. I have urged all nations, including the United States, to ratify the Convention quickly so that it can enter into force at the earliest possible date of January 13, 1995. We also have continued to urge those countries that have not signed the Convention to do so. The United States plays a leading role in the work of the CWC Preparatory Commission headquartered in The Hague, to elaborate the technical and administrative procedures for implementing the Convention.

The United States participated actively in the Ad Hoc Group of Government Experts convened by the Third Biological Weapons Review Conference to identify and examine potential verification measures. The consensus final report of the experts group will be considered at a Special Conference of States Parties, to be held September 19–30, 1994. The United States supports the holding of a Special Conference and will promote new transparency measures to help strengthen the Convention.

The membership of the Australia Group (AG) of countries cooperating against CBW proliferation stands at 25. At the December 1993 meeting of the AG, members reiterated their commitment to comprehensive and global chemical and biological disarmament, which can only be

achieved by the early entry into force and effective and universal implementation of the CWC and full compliance with the Biological Weapons Convention. In this context, members stressed the importance of encouraging the widest possible adherence to the CWC.

Experts at the December AG meeting also discussed ways of implementing CBW export controls more effectively. The Group considered streamlining licensing procedures applicable to mixtures and small quantities of precursor chemicals, with a view to facilitating legitimate trade without increasing the risk of contributing to potential weapons production. It also took steps to enhance cooperation in enforcement of existing controls.

The United States Government determined that three commercial entities in Thailand had engaged in chemical weapons proliferation activities that required the imposition of trade sanctions against the entities, effective on February 8, 1994. Additional information on this determination is contained in a classified report to the Congress provided pursuant to the Chemical and Biological Weapons Control and Warfare Elimination Act of 1991.

Progress also was made in the steps taken by countries outside the AG to extend chemical weapons-related export controls. For example, the Royal Thai Government adopted regulations to prevent the export of Thai laborers to programs of CBW concern. Poland enacted legislation to implement controls on CBW-related items.

Pursuant to section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, I report that there were no additional expenses directly attributable to the exercise of authorities conferred by the declaration of the national emergency.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 23, 1994.

Remarks at a Reception Commemorating National Park Week *May 23, 1994*

Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary. Attorney General Reno, Mr. Frampton, Mr. Kennedy, Congressman Vento, ladies and gentle-

men. I sure have had a good time this afternoon.

You know, this is a wonderful occasion for all of us as Americans. And in many ways it's a very personal occasion. Hillary and I were up here whispering to each other; I said, now, didn't we go to the Dinosaur National Park in Utah and to the Buffalo, and then I started reeling them off. She said, "Bill, forget it. You will never remember all the parks we have visited." [Laughter] And we can't. We can't begin to remember all the ones we have visited and all the things that have happened to us from Florida to northern California and all points in between.

I do want to say that I am personally very grateful to the people who have been recognized this year. Ambassador Lane, thank you, sir, for your many contributions. Steve Coleman and Josephine Butler and the other people from Meridian Hill—we were there on Earth Day. And I want you to know that—not that I didn't trust you—but the other day I was in the neighborhood, and I had my car sort of drive by the park again just to make sure there was no false advertising. [Laughter] And sure enough, it was just like it was on Earth Day. And I thank you for that urban miracle of nature. I congratulate the Dade County Public Schools. And Phyllis Cohen, thank you for coming here and for teaching our young people about the importance of our natural resources. The children of Florida have a great burden as they grow up now to reconcile our responsibility to the remarkable ecostructure of that State and the explosion of growth that's going on there. Richard Gale, congratulations to you, sir, and thank you for your career.

You know, we were talking here a moment ago. I'll bet you that more American citizens have met employees of the Park Service than any other department of the Federal Government. They may have thought more about employees of the IRS—[laughter]—but they have actually met more employees of the Park Service. And I'll bet you—you think about it—I bet each and every one of you here can remember park rangers you met at Carlsbad or Yellowstone or Yosemite or you name it. And that's a very important thing. At a time when people have such negative impressions of Government, this is our Government at its best.

And I appreciate what Secretary Babbitt said about the budget. Just so you'll know exactly how hard that was, this budget recommends the outright elimination of over 100 Government

programs, slashing over 200 more. If adopted, it'll be the first time in anybody's memory that the Congress and the President have actually worked together to pass an executive budget for 2 years in a row and will give us 3 years of deficit reduction for the first time since Harry Truman was President. But we still spent more on the Park Service, because that's where a lot of America's heart is and where a lot of America's future is. And the California bill will be an astonishing achievement if we can get it through. And we're working hard on that.

Thank you, Elizabeth Barlow Rogers, for your work in Central Park. For all of us who have ever been to the zoo or the carousel or jogged around the reservoir with bated breath, we thank you for what you have done to give that great park a new lease on life.

Most important, I'd like to thank Secretary Babbitt. We've been friends a long time. We've talked about these things a long time. He grew up near the Grand Canyon. I grew up in Hot Springs, which actually is, I think, the only city in America, perhaps except this one, that actually has a whole national park within the city limits. And it was the first reservation set aside by Congress for a national reservation in 1932, in recognition of the fact that in the 16th century, Hernando DeSoto came there and found the Indians bathing in the hot sulfur springs. He was looking for the fountain of youth. I grew up there and lost it. [Laughter] But Bruce and I have been through these things for so many years. And when we served as Governors, I don't know how many times I heard the Western Governors who cared about the environment say that there had to be some way that Interior could push this country toward sustainable development, push this country toward maintaining its resources and still not feel that we were violating the culture and the way of life of the people, especially in the West where the Interior Department owns so much land. I think he has managed the tension between traditional culture and change better than any other person in the entire United States could have done it, in the only department that really still literally affects the lives of more than half the people in many communities in this country. So I am very grateful to him. I thank him for what he's done. And I know all of you will join me in expressing your appreciation for his brilliant leadership.

Now I have to say just a parochial word about where I live now. I live on National Park Service

Reservation number one. [Laughter] And I want you all to take note of that the next time you hear somebody say the President's off the reservation. [Laughter] I'm actually here with Hillary and Chelsea on part of the original design of Washington laid out by George Washington and Pierre L'Enfant. Like other families who've lived here, we've had the honor of planting several trees on these grounds, a willow oak, a leaf linden, an American elm. We love this place that is maintained by our Park Service.

I want to recognize two special contributors and say I enjoyed having my picture taken with the White House staff, who do so much to maintain the house and the grounds, just a moment ago. I want to thank our Head Usher, Gary Walters, who does a great job for us on so many events here. Where's Gary? There's Gary back there. And I'd like to ask Irv Williams, the Executive Grounds Superintendent—for nearly 40 years he's been here. Where are you, Irv? Stand up. Thank you so much. Three decades ago, Mr. Williams helped Jacqueline Kennedy redesign the First Lady's Garden. It was later renamed the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden. It is just opposite the Rose Garden in the back of the White House. It's another of the wonderful legacies that this fine lady left our country with the help of Irv Williams, who's given his life to this work, and we thank you, sir.

Wallace Stegner said, "The National Parks are the best idea we ever had. Absolutely demo-

cratic, absolutely American, they reflect us at our best rather than our worst." I could say it no better. Let us try to live by the mottoes of the National Parks. Let us try to lift our spirits on a daily basis as we are all uplifted when we visit them. And let us for the rest of our lives rededicate ourselves to preserving and enhancing them. They are the legacy of every generation. They're our hope for the future, our tie to the past, our connection to the land. They're bigger than any of us, and they make us all better. And we thank you all for your contribution to that end.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to George T. Frampton, Jr., Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish and Wildlife and Parks; Roger Kennedy, Director, National Park Service; Laurence W. Lane, Jr., former Ambassador to Australia and Japan; Steven W. Coleman, founder and president, and Josephine Butler, vice chair, Friends of Meridian Hill; Phyllis Cohen, deputy superintendent, Dade County Public School District; Richard Gale, director, National Fire Center, Boise, ID; and Elizabeth Barlow Rogers, administrator, New York City Central Park. The National Park Week proclamation of April 14 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Guntis Ulmanis of Latvia and an Exchange With Reporters

May 24, 1994

President Clinton. Since we're not going to do a press availability—it's late in the afternoon—I'd like to make a brief statement about the purpose of this meeting and then ask President Ulmanis to say a few words.

First, I want to welcome him to the United States and express my appreciation for the close working relationship we have had with him during my tenure and his, which have overlapped.

Our administration has worked very hard to support the withdrawal of Russian troops from the Baltics in general and from Latvia in par-

ticular. We have been very involved in trying to help resolve the dispute between Russia and Latvia over the facility at Skrunda, and we have been very pleased at the resolution of that. And we have supported the resettlement of Russian soldiers and the housing program for them when they leave the Baltics and go back home. And so we look forward to the completion of that effort this summer. And we are very, very pleased about it. It's an important part of our overall objectives and our long-term relationships with all the nations in the Baltics area